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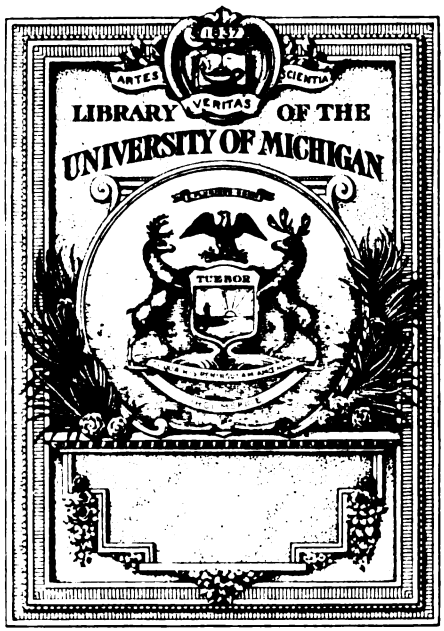
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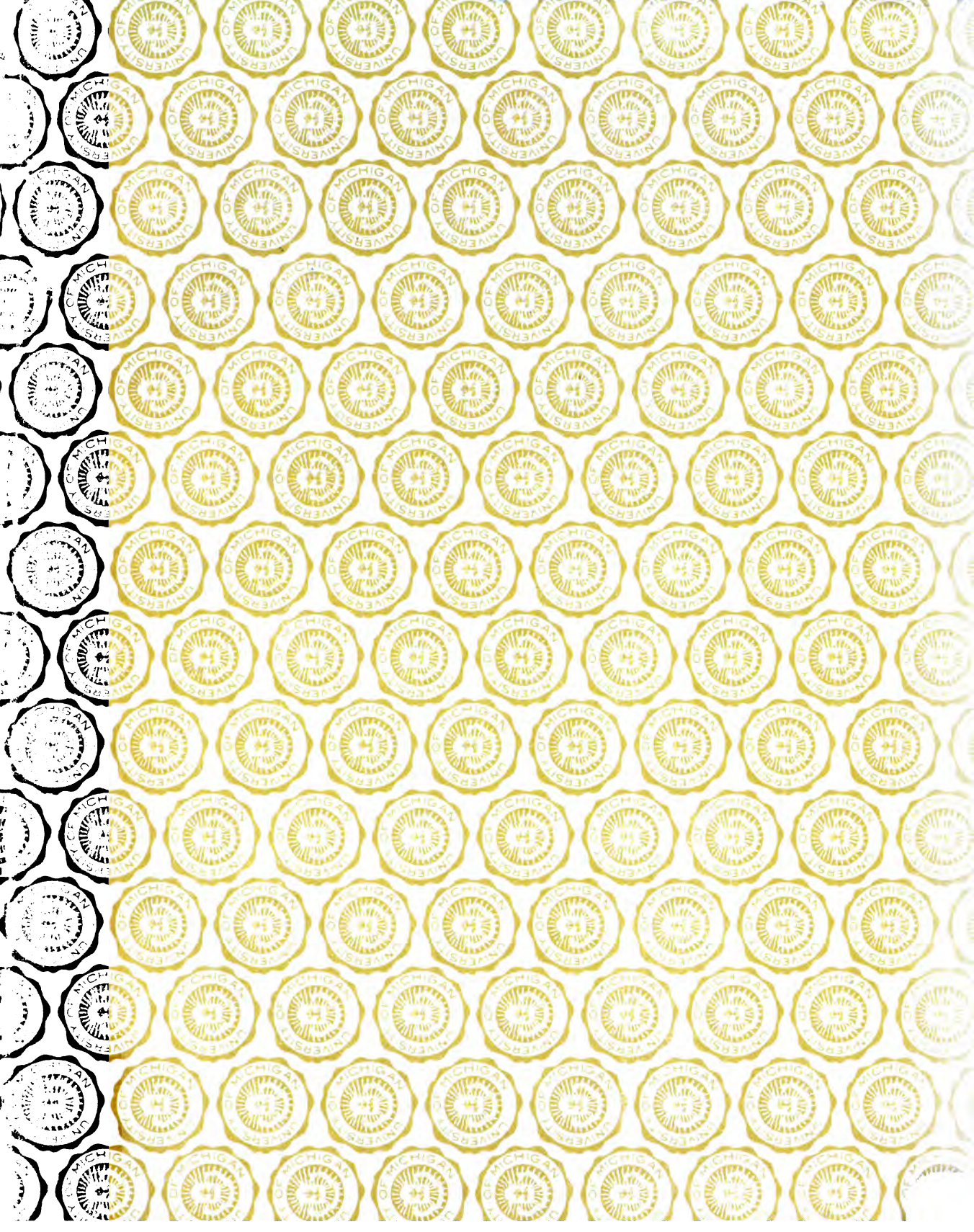

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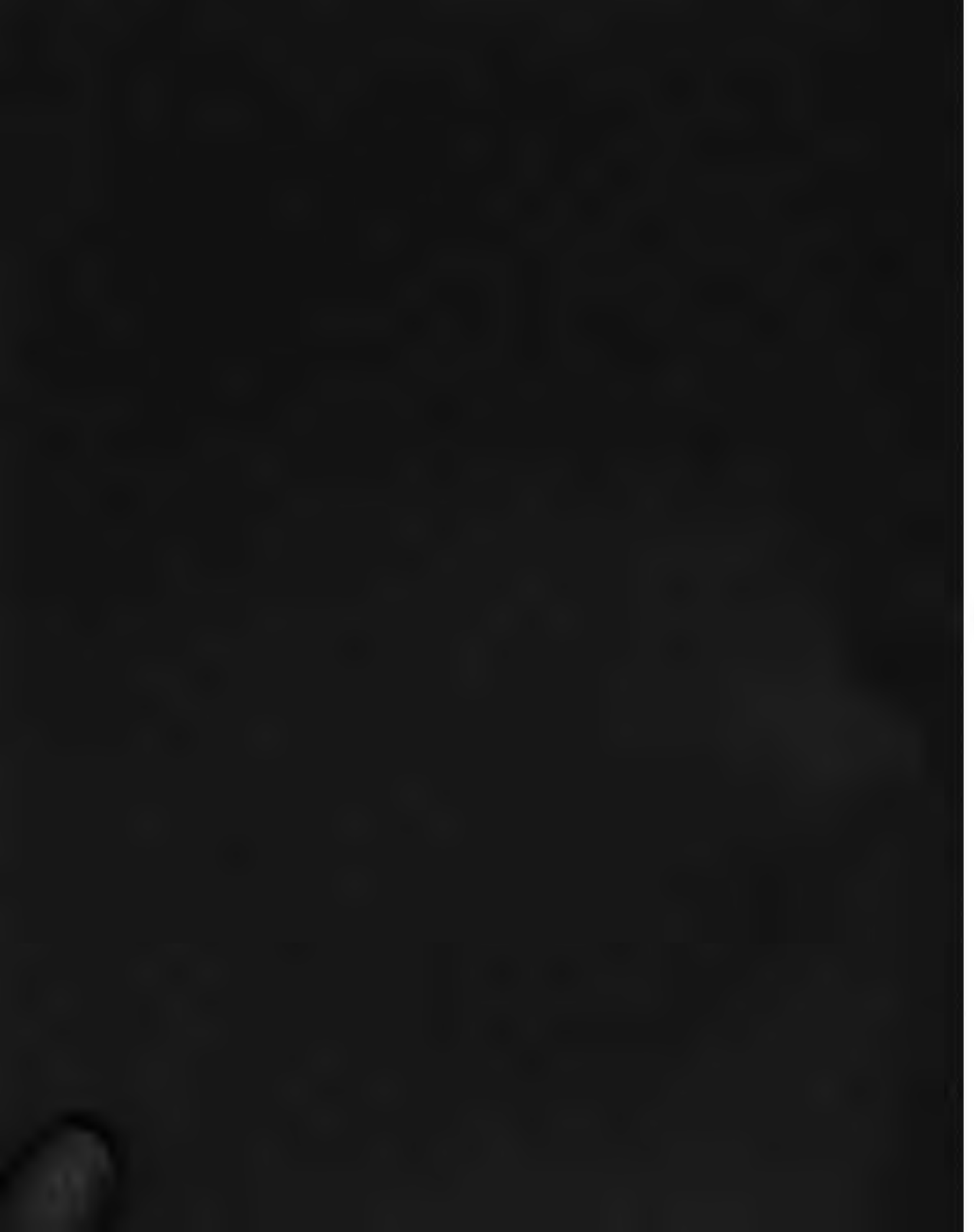

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PREFERMENT:

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A

SATIRE.

BY

JOHN ROBINSON.

——————Stulta est Clementia, cum tot ubique
Vatibus occurras, perituræ parcere Chartæ.

LONDON:

Printed for W. NICOLL, in St. Paul's Church-Yard.

MDCCLXV.

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PREFERMENT.

WHEN big-ſwoln Pride with haughty ſtep walks forth;
When ev'ry Coxcomb ſcoffs at modeſt Worth,
And of his Wealth or empty Titles proud,
Aſks Adoration from the ſuppliant Croud,
Satire ſhould ply the Laſh, nor pitying ſpare:
Juſtice bids ſtrike---and who ſhall bid forbear?

The Sat'riſt thus, with love of Right inſpir'd,
'Gainſt Pride with honeſt Indignation fir'd,

MRK

Preludes the ſtroke, then whirls the Laſh around,
And ev'ry ſaucy Knave receives a Wound.

Heedleſs of this, nor ſcrupulouſly nice
In fixing bounds to Virtue and to Vice,
Whoe'er the ſtately Scenes which Wealth can raiſe,
And Fame's fair Shew with longing Eye ſurveys,
Attend the precepts of the Muſe, and learn
This envied Wealth and Dignity to earn.

There are who, ſeconded by partial Fate,
Attain to Grandeur at an eaſy rate.
With brazen look, and Falſhood on his Tongue,
For Gain the Lawyer proves that Right is Wrong,
And, not leſs ſtrange, if Int'reſt ſo invite,
By dint of Impudence proves Wrong is Right.
The Doctor gravely hems and chafes his brow,
Preſcribes, then takes his Fee, and makes his bow;
Preſcribes---yet cannot from this Maxim ſwerve,
Who cures the Patient, will the Doctor ſtarve.

The

The Juſtice ſits in awful State among
Whores, Rogues, and Bawds, a tributary throng,
From Brothels nightly rak'd for ſhew, and then
(All dues diſcharg'd) committed---back agen.
And Cits, whom all the World muſt own diſcreet,
Thrive by fair Profit---when they cannot cheat.
Let ſuch with ſelf-ſufficient ſneer refuſe,
Want's meagre ſons ſhall profit by the Muſe.

Strive not to riſe by poring o'er the Page
Which Senſe has handed down from Age to Age,
By treading firm in Virtue's thorny way,
If thy warm Wiſhes cannot brook delay;
Leave Ferguſon to trace a Comet's Courſe,
To teach the Sum of Gravitative Force,
In what Elliptic Orbs the Planets roll,
Where ſpreads th' Equator, and how moves the Pole;
Haſt Thou but ſkill in ſome new-fangled way,
A threadbare round of boyiſh Tricks to play,

To bid a Fruit-Tree on a Table grow,
And murder'd Cocks ſtart up alive, and crow,
To bid obedient Balls fly off in Fume,
And well-bred Cards dance Minuets round a Room;
Or if in ſteady poize Thou dar'ſt aſpire
To ſhine a light-heel'd Hero on the Wire;
Or canſt Thou chatter an unmeaning Tale,
Mouth a Mock Sermon 'till thy Lungs ſhall fail,
Diſtort each Feature of thy vacant Face,
With idleſt Mimicry thyſelf debaſe,
Thou'lt gladly draw thy Thouſands ev'ry day,
Wits, Women, Beaux and Blockheads, Grave and Gay,
And (whilſt fair Merit ſtarves, unknown to Fame)
F--te only ſtands to thine a Rival Name.

Canſt Thou not theſe; whene'er 'gainſt hateful Fraud,
With open look Truth vent'rous comes abroad,
One hour in ſilence look not coolly on,
But ſtrait let Falſhood's Cauſe and thine be one;

Call

Call forth thy fair Opponent to ſubdue,
Of pois'nous Slanders an infernal Crew,
Defile her ſnowy Robe with fouleſt ſtains,
Long to the Cauſe ſtand faſt, nor grudge thy Pains,
In new deceits, new knav'ries ſeek reſource,
Nor poorly ſicken at their want of Force,
What tho' unable to miſlead our Senſe,
By quirks of Wit or ſtrokes of Eloquence,
Tho' Black Thou haſt not power to picture White,
Nor blazon fair by Day the deeds of Night,
Defend vile Falſhood's Cauſe in endleſs broils,
And fraudful Villains ſhall reward thy Toils.

Perhaps ſome Letcher, tott'ring o'er the Grave,
One to Debauch'ry thro' his Life a Slave,
And ſtill the ſame, tho' verging to his End,
Vouchſafes to rank Thee as his humble Friend:
For Him the ſmutty hint, the Jeſt obſcene,
The Tale of Sins whilſt Appetite was keen,

Retain in ſtore, with him ſhall theſe prevail,
Untir'd he'll liſten to a luſcious Tale,
And canſt Thou ſervilely a Meſſage bear,
An am'rous Meſſage to a Female Ear,
He'll bounteous pay thy Pains; nay more, when Death
Shall ſnatch Him murm'ring with his lateſt breath,
He'll leave his Proſtitute to be thy Wife,
And add a Dowry that may bleſs thy Life.

Or is his Heart with Av'rice canker'd o'er,
Does He with Iron Hand oppreſs the Poor,
Then eager ſtrive to ſwell his golden Heap,
Nor Rules of Probity nor Juſtice keep,
The well-earn'd Pittance rend from trembling Age,
Deaf to its Prayers, and ſcornful of its Rage,
Delude the helpleſs Orphan of its due,
Tho' Youth and Innocence for Pity ſue,
Extol his Prudence who for ev'ry loan,
A tenfold Intereſt knows to make his own;

With

With wary Eye watch o'er this ill-got Pelf,
Nor aſk the ſmalleſt portion for thyſelf;
So, 'ſpite of Thoſe by Nature's ties his friends,
Arraign'd as Flatt'rers for their private Ends,
So when beneath Fate's ſtroke the Wretch ſhall fall,
To Thee he'll give it---gives he it at all.

Gnatho diſdain'd for meerly daily Bread,
The rugged path of Induſtry to tread,
Tho' niggard Fortune ey'd him with a frown,
And bred him humbly, idle and unknown,
But bleſt with Pride, and conſcious that the Wiſe
Superior to the frowns of Fortune riſe,
Conſcious that Prudence Fortune's threats o'er-rules,
Fortune the Dread alone of timid Fools,
Bold ſtepp'd he forth, and with inceſſant pains,
Attun'd his Reed to Panegyric ſtrains;
Harpax (a greedy Wretch) with lib'ral hand,
Diffus'd his Bounties quickly thro' the Land,

Dull, booby Lords, from Paris or from Rome
Return'd, contemptuous of their Native Home,
Shone the ſupport of Taſte, whilſt Juſt and Brave,
If Wealthy, roſe the Coward and the Knave,
But vainly glow'd Ambition in his Breaſt,
Vain was the Flatt'ry by his Muſe poſſeſt,
'Till gay Narciſſus (who by Nature's Plan
Was doubtleſs deſtin'd to become a Man,
But taught and faſhion'd by a Mother's care,
Forbid the Toils of Manly Sports to bear,
Forbid to ſtudy---" Let the Wretch who's poor,
" For Profit turn his muſty Volumes o'er,"---
A Connoiſſeur in Dreſs and Faſhions deem'd,
A Fop nor Man nor Monkey quite he ſeem'd)
'Till he a lucrative Employ beſtow'd,
To pay the Verſe which for his Honour flow'd.
Now Gnatho loudly ſpoke Narciſſus' Fame,
With Him had each Purſuit, each Care the ſame;
Inebriate joy'd Narciſſus o'er the Bowl,
Could He no ſenſual Appetite controul,

Gam'd

Gam'd He unwearied 'till the Morning light,
Mock'd He profanely each Religious Rite;
Obſequious Gnatho join'd the Rev'lling Band,
And walk'd with foul Debauch'ry hand in hand,
In Gambling Arts was ſtudious to prevail,
And ſcorn'd Religion as an Old Wife's Tale;
Nay would Narciſſus be a Poet known,
Ev'n Gnatho's Verſes were no more his Own;
Narciſſus own'd them, and we falſely hence
Believ'd him portion'd with a little Senſe.

At length by Bribes and fordid Uſ'ry grown
Too Rich his Patron's Government to own,
Unreal Pleaſures hating more to feign,
Gnatho, with lordly air, ſhook off his Chain.

Nor let ſtarv'd Honeſty, with lifted Eyes,
Ban the mean Wretch who thus could dare to riſe;
Has He not wiſely ſcorn'd his abject State,
Tho' at th' expence of Virtue, to be Great?

Avails it nought inceſſant to be ſhown,
When drawn in lazy State about the Town;
By Blockheads who with admiration ſtare,
And envious Rogues who would ſuch Fortune ſhare?
Nought in the higheſt Pew at Church to ſnore,
To taſte each Bleſſing Wealth retains in ſtore,
That Gnatho ſhould not eagerly withdraw
From Honeſty's hard fare, and Bed of Straw?

If Adulation is a Taſk ſevere;
Think that Ambition's ever link'd with Care,
And Toils obſtructive bravely he defies,
'Mongſt Fortune's Vot'ries who deſigns to riſe.
The haughty Vagrants who, when no more pleaſe
Ragouts, Soupe-maigre, Frogs and Fricaſſees,
From Gallia's ſlaviſh Region hither come,
To ſeek a happier than their native Home,
Ignobly ſtoop (Decorum ſet aſide)
With ev'ry winning Art to flatter Pride,

Expert

Expert in Wiles, they ſeemingly controul,
If injur'd, each emotion of the Soul,
Pliant they yield, and with conſummate ſkill
Are molded ever to their Neighbour's Will;
" For Them, they aſk that Heav'n will deign to give
" Bare Suſtenance, and peacefully to live;
" No gainful View them from their Country draws,
" Self-Exiles ſolely for Religion's Cauſe."
But ſoon as are theſe Hypocrites believ'd,
Soon as, like Brethren, to our Arms receiv'd,
They heap up Riches, and to Honours riſe,
(The Maſk thrown off) our Honeſty deſpiſe,
Croud into Office, and with rigid Sway,
Bid ev'n Britannia's freeborn Sons obey,
And tho' from Slav'ry and from Want preſerv'd,
Tho' bleſs'd with Honours which they ne'er deſerv'd,
They baſely laugh at us for what we've given,
And damn the Country they might term their Heav'n.

The

The Sire to whom the Modern World's unknown,
Who his lov'd Youngſter deſtines for the Gown,
Preſumes, perhaps, that if He's deeply read,
If He with Greek and Latin ſtores his Head,
Can Truth beneath the ruſt of Time diſcern,
And Goſpel Precepts to a Tittle learn,
Exempt from Duty, He ſhall ſit at Eaſe,
And pay his Curates, as his Rev'rence pleaſe.
Let Him exult and render grateful Praiſe,
His utmoſt Labour if kind Fortune pays,
(Long as ſome Ruſtic 'Squire approves his Care)
With Sunday dinner, and Twelve Pounds a Year.
He only fattens who, whate'er his Wit,
To fawn or bribe for Int'reſt can ſubmit,
Can Party Notions for a Patron preach,
Or in Conventicles new Tenets teach;
Thrice bleſt are ſuch; all Happineſs is Theirs;
When Poverty no more awakes their Fears,
They ſcorn to pleaſe, not fearing to offend,
And make their Office ſerve each Private End;

Like

Like Him who late his Neighbour's Credit ſoil'd,
And from Rebuke indignantly recoil'd,
In fair Diſpute no ſecond Onſet ſtood,
But ſwell'd with Venom, like a bloated Toad,
Fled to his Pulpit, for increaſe of Pow'r,
And ev'ry Sunday curs'd him by the Hour.

And ſhall not Satire, when ſuch Things look down,
With ſaucy Pride, on all without a Gown,
(Tho' it no pompous Language can diſpenſe,
Nonſenſe to cloath, and make it paſs for Senſe,
But in the Cauſe of Virtue nobly warm,
Dares honeſt Truth in ſtrong Expreſſion arm)
Shall it not ſnatch them forth to Public View?
Detect their Folly, Pride, and Malice too?
With Eagle-Talon ſeize, as lawful Prey,
Who, brib'd, their Friends, their Country would betray?
Or who, for Gain, ne'er ſtagger at the Sin,
To forge a Will, and cheat the next a-kin?

Who fire their Roofs, to loſe their little Store,
That pitying Charity may give them more?
Or ſit down Bankrupts ſolely with a View,
From a feign'd Wreck their Fortunes to renew?
Yes; and ſiniſter Strife ſhall it diſdain,
Folly ſhall laugh, and --- ſhall curſe in vain.

Meek was this --- e'er yet Preferment came,
And blew his Sparks of Pride into a Flame;
Whilſt adverſe Fate refus'd to rank Him more
Than the poor Paſtor of a Flock as poor,
His modeſt wiſh inclin'd that Flock to pleaſe,
And duteous Labour wore the ſmile of Eaſe;
Then with Fanatic Dotards could he pray,
And ſniv'lling ſtill appear more Fool than They,
Could nightly with Old Women club his Tale,
Of dang'rous Cuſtoms in the Church's Pale,
Could whine out Lectures of Two Hours at leaſt,
Could weep at Fun'rals, and at Weddings feaſt.

At

At length Preferment ſet him high; nor more
Religious Duty the ſame Aſpect wore,
Fierce Arrogance how ſoon could we deſcry,
With Ire revengeful, ſparkling in his Eye,
When One to Candour and to Truth ally'd,
Againſt his biaſs'd dictates dar'd decide.

Have I not known Thee---- with furious ſtare,
With all the frantic ſymptoms of Deſpair,
In low, dull, incoherent Rant exclaim,
And heap thine Adverſary's Head with blame,
Whilſt He has (heedleſs of thy Rage) been found
Joining the laugh againſt Thee which went round?

Nor be the Muſe arraign'd as too ſevere,
Too prompt to cenſure whom She well might ſpare;
She loves to praiſe---let but the Man be ſhown,
Who for his Country's Good neglects his own;
Point out the Man who, ſteady in his Choice,
No Hypocritic Falſhood in his Voice,

In proſp'rous Times Religion's Path has trod,
Nor turn'd if Perſecution graſp'd the Rod,
The Man who, pitying Poverty's diſtreſs,
Holds forth his hand, the Grievance to redreſs,
Who foſters Merit with Paternal Care,
Bids Induſtry his kind Indulgence ſhare,
From Danger ſhrinks not, are his Rights at ſtake,
And follows Virtue but for Virtue's ſake;
Theſe with unwonted warmth, in gen'rous ſtrain,
The Muſe ſhall praiſe, nor ſhall her Praiſe be vain.

But if a Man knows barely to confine
Ten Syllables in one well-cadenc'd Line,
Can a fair Stock of well-pair'd Sounds impart,
And has a little honeſty at heart,
(Tho' He ne'er pick'd up ſcraps of Wit at Rome,
Nor wail'd with Wh------d over Ceſar's Tomb,
Nor learn'd of Br--n to eſtimate the Times,
Nor ſtudied Satire in his trivial Rhimes)

Shall

Shall He not write (a Coil tho' Wh------d keep
About the Danger till his Readers ſleep)
Not dare condemn, when Vice is kept in Pay,
And Dullneſs by Preferment met half-way?---

Yet who ſo ſplenetic, but laughs to ſee
The Freaks of Folly in Proſperity?
One lordly Fool delights in ſumptuous Treats,
And 'mongſt his Paraſites his Income eats;
Another without Taſte or Wit writes Verſe,
And bribes an Audience, when He would rehearſe;
One ſo compleatly, ſo innately Fool,
His Head ne'er harbour'd one poor Grammar Rule,
Decides 'mongſt Critics --- and with juſt Pretence,
For can a Lord want Judgement, Taſte, and Senſe?
Whilſt who ſcarce knows, ſo tuneful are his Ears,
The worſt blind Fidler's Notes from Handel's Airs,
On Op'ras doats, is raptur'd at each Note,
Each ſquall diſguſtful from Tenduci's Throat,

And each Performer laviſh will He pay,
Laviſh commend --- for Faſhion leads the Way,
Tho' the whole Tribe, by Affectation kept,
Is meer meer Rubbiſh from Italia ſwept;
Others protect and patronize the Stage,
Where MINORS, PATRONS, LYARS, MAYORS engage,
Thoſe ſmart, quaint Things which ev'ry fancy hit,
Jonſon and Congreve Judgement had and Wit,
Jonſon and Congreve may a Critic pleaſe,
But what have They produc'd to vye with Theſe?

Strange that our poliſh'd Taſte ſhould tamely bear,
Theſe Mimic-Mock'ries of the Theatre!
Which, circumſpect to aim their Jeſt aright,
Bite Thoſe who cannot and who will not bite.
Strange that this would-be-humour keeps the Field,
That Shakeſpear's Rage divine to This ſhould yield!
Yet but a little while, and it ſhall fail,
Wrapt with Arne's Op'ras in Oblivion's Veil,

Or

Or Senſe and Judgement from our Iſle were fled,
And F--wkes and W--ty's Poems would be read.

To hiſs at Knaves that gain, and Fools that loſe,
With Indignation heated, roſe the Muſe,
With Theſe a haughty Levite has She join'd,
And link'd in Bardlings --- which She ſcarce deſign'd,
O'erbold, indeed, the wrathful Herd to face,
(Dull Poets ever are a techy Race)
Reſolv'd, howe'er, tho' Gravity exclaim,
And boaſt the ſanction of a Rev'rend Name;
Tho' Thoſe characteriz'd by Folly's Leer,
Whoſe Faces an eternal ſimper wear,
Draw Characters, and vengeful Lampoons write,
With falſe Invectives, and conceit they bite;
Reſolv'd whilſt Judgement gives her to divide
Wh------d and Br---n from Gray and Akenſide,
Since unambitious, ſave of Reaſon's Praiſe,
To dance each Puppet-Bardling in her Lays.

Let

Let not Detraction's Tongue the Muſe defame,
And as an idle Wand'rer load with Blame;
Satire diſdains (unus'd to ſervile Fear)
Trammell'd by Method, in one Courſe to ſteer,
Nor will its Native Liberty renounce,
Frown'd to compliance by a haughty Dunce;
Ty'd by no Plot, and drudging in no Tale,
Nor hymning Silence in a lonely Vale,
But free where Choice and Reaſon lead to rove,
The Bleſſings of Variety will prove;
Will now a Slave inflate with Pride detect,
Now teaze a Fop, a Poem now inſpect,
Now in Corruption's boſom waken Shame,
Now brand the Coward with a Coward's Name,
Commend the pious Dame who ne'er is won
To Sunday Ombre 'till her Prayers are done,
Who, fond the depths of Knowledge to diſcern,
Pores over Rab'lais, Rocheſter, and Sterne;
And bleſs the gen'rous Friends who hourly ſtrive
Innate Religion to maintain alive,

At

At Revelation aim the deadly ſtroke,
Eager to free us from its fancied Yoke.

But what the Fruit? ſome lukewarm Reader cries,
Will Knaves be honeſt? or will Fools be wiſe?
Will Sunday Gameſters yield up each Pretence?
And once will W--ty ſtartle us with Senſe?
Can Satire fondly cheriſh hopes ſo vain,
To cleanſe ſuch Ethiops from their ſable ſtain?
Why grant that ſuch perſiſt (yet ſurely Shame
May influence ſome) grant ſuch remain the ſame;
Whilſt arm'd from Innocence to ward diſgrace,
And faſten it on thoſe who dare be baſe,
From Fame's bright Liſt diſdainful to diſcard,
Things who profane the ſacred Name of Bard,
Upheld by Truth (whoever it offend)
Shall Satire live, and rank as Virtue's friend.

FINIS.

K I N G.